



**Weill Cornell**  
**Medicine**

# **Weill Cornell Medical College** **Commencement**

Thursday, the Fourteenth of May  
Two Thousand Twenty-Six





# Program

## Academic Procession

Kathryn Boor, Ph.D.  
University Marshal

Lawrence Palmer, Ph.D.  
Macebearer

## Presentation of the Academic Assembly

Professor Boor

## Opening Reflection

Kimiko Hahn  
New York State Poet

## Dean's Address to the Graduating Class

Robert A. Harrington, M.D.  
Stephen and Suzanne Weiss Dean, Weill Cornell Medicine  
Provost for Medical Affairs, Cornell University

## President's Address to the Graduating Class

Michael Kotlikoff, V.M.D., Ph.D., Sc.D. (h.c)  
President and Professor of Molecular Physiology, Cornell University

## Introduction of the Master of Science in Health Sciences for Physician Assistants Student Speaker

Joseph E. Safdieh, M.D.  
Senior Associate Dean for Education, Weill Cornell Medical College

## Address by the Master of Science in Health Sciences for Physician Assistants Student Speaker

Veerali Patel

## Introduction of the Doctor of Medicine Program Student Speaker

Dean Safdieh

## Address by the Doctor of Medicine Program Student Speaker

Daniel Anisfeld Tay

## Presentation of the Jeanne and Herbert Siegel Award for Excellence in Medical Education to Michele Fuortes, M.D., Ph.D.

Dean Harrington

## Presentation of the Jeanne and Herbert Siegel Faculty Development Award to Pinkal Desai, M.D.

Dean Harrington

## Presentation of the Dean's Award for Excellence in Mentorship to Kyu Rhee, M.D., Ph.D.

Dean Harrington

## Presentation of the Medical College Alumni Award of Distinction to David A. Asch, M.D. '84

Anthony M. Rossi Jr., M.D. '08  
President, Weill Cornell Medical College Alumni Association

## Mozart Clarinet Quintet (Arr. Jonah Cohen) *IV. Allegretto con variazioni*

Weill Cornell Music and Medicine Initiative  
Artistic Director: Richard M. Kogan, M.D.  
Violin 1 : Hana Burgess, Ph.D. entering class of '24,  
Alexander Zhao, M.D. '26, Shulammit Li, M.D. '29  
Violin 2: Jeffrey Shi, M.D. '28, Sarah Wozniak, M.D. '26,  
Ella Blicher, M.D. '26  
Viola: Annie Wu, M.D. '27, Caitlin Unkenholz, M.D. '26  
Cello: Bryce Katch, M.D., Ph.D. entering class of '23,  
Harry Choi, M.D., Ph.D., entering class of '24  
Flute: Caroline Young, M.D. '26  
Clarinet: Neerav Kumar, M.D. '26

## Administration of the Physician Assistant Oath

Kelly R. Porta, D.M.Sc., PA-C  
Associate Dean for PA Studies and Program Director

## Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Master of Science in Health Sciences for Physician Assistants

Dean Porta

## Conferment of the Degree of Master of Science in Health Sciences for Physician Assistants

President Kotlikoff

## Administration of the Hippocratic Oath

Dean Harrington

## Presentation of the Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine

Dean Safdieh

## Conferment of the Degree of Doctor of Medicine

President Kotlikoff

## Farewell to the Graduates

Dean Harrington

## Alma Mater

## Recessional

*Kindly hold applause until all presentations are completed*

# **Siegel Family Faculty Awards 2026**

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# Jeanne and Herbert Siegel Award for Excellence in Medical Education

## Michele Fuortes, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Michele Fuortes was born and raised in Rome, Italy, where he earned his medical degree summa cum laude from the University of Rome La Sapienza Medical School. Following his residency, he relocated to New York City for what was initially intended to be a year-long research fellowship focused on septic shock — a temporary assignment that has now lasted four decades.

He completed his doctorate in cell biology and anatomy at Weill Cornell Medicine's Graduate School of Medical Sciences under the mentorship of Dr. Carl Nathan, studying neutrophil activation. Upon graduation, Dr. Fuortes joined the Weill Cornell Medicine faculty, where he has remained conducting research and teaching for more than 30 years.

In recent years, Dr. Fuortes has focused on advancing medical education through the development and implementation of innovative pedagogical tools and modern instructional methodologies. He currently serves as the director of the Essential Principles of Medicine course and as the chair of the General Faculty Council at Weill Cornell Medicine. He has received several Weill Cornell Medicine awards recognizing excellence and innovation in teaching. Dr. Fuortes remains committed to shaping the educational experience of the next generation of physicians at Weill Cornell Medicine.

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# Jeanne and Herbert Siegel Faculty Development Award

## Pinkal Desai, M.D.

Dr. Pinkal Desai is a National Cancer Institute (NCI)-funded physician-scientist and associate professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Medicine, and an attending physician at NewYork-Presbyterian. She is a faculty member in The Leukemia Program at Weill Cornell Medicine and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, with a clinical focus on clonal hematopoiesis, leukemia and myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS). She also serves as clinical director of the Molecular Aging Institute within The Englander Institute for Precision Medicine, where she leads multidisciplinary efforts in translational research focused on aging and cancer prevention.

Dr. Desai is a nationally recognized leader in clonal hematopoiesis and myeloid malignancies. Her work has been instrumental in defining pre-leukemic states, including demonstrating that somatic mutations can precede acute myeloid leukemia by years and identifying mutation-specific risks for progression. Her research integrates epidemiologic, genomic and clinical approaches to advance early detection and prevention strategies.

She leads multiple investigator-initiated and industry-sponsored clinical trials and has helped establish a novel Clonal Hematopoiesis Risk clinic focused on early intervention. Supported by NCI and Department of Defense funding, her work bridges discovery and clinical application.

An accomplished mentor and prolific author, Dr. Desai has published in leading journals and is an invited speaker at major international meetings. Her contributions have been recognized with numerous honors, including the Charles, Lillian and Betty Neuwirth Clinical Scholar Award.

# Dean's Award for Excellence in Mentorship 2026

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## **Kyu Rhee, M.D., Ph.D.**

Dr. Kyu Rhee received his undergraduate degree from Cornell University and his M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California, Irvine, followed by clinical training in internal medicine and infectious diseases at Weill Cornell Medicine. Since joining the faculty in 2005, he has risen to Professor of Medicine and of Microbiology and Immunology, and he currently serves as Co-Director of the Cornell Center for Antimicrobial Resistance Research and Education and as Vice Chair for Research in the Weill Department of Medicine. An internationally recognized expert on tuberculosis and antibiotic pharmacology, he leads three research training programs to develop physician-scientists within the Department of Medicine, at Weill Cornell Medicine, and across the Tri-Institutional community. His influence spans the full academic continuum, including didactic teaching of medical students, clinical fellows, and graduate trainees, and he holds multiple leadership roles to support residents, postdocs, and early-career faculty. He has contributed to mentorship-focused scholarship and national dialogue on physician-scientist training pathways, and he has formally mentored more than fifty trainees. Dr. Rhee is the "go-to" person for advice on pursuing a career as a physician-scientist at Weill Cornell Medicine.

# Alumni Award of Distinction 2026

## Weill Cornell Medical College

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### David A. Asch, M.D. '84

Dr. David A. Asch is senior vice president for strategic initiatives at the University of Pennsylvania. He is also the John Morgan Professor of Medicine and of Medical Ethics and Health Care Policy at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. Additionally, Dr. Asch is professor of health-care management and of operations, information and decisions at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Asch completed his residency training in internal medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was also a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar. He earned an M.B.A. from Wharton.

Dr. Asch's work blends economics, psychology and marketing in a field now known as behavioral economics. He is the author of more than 500 scientific papers.

In 2001, he founded and directed the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Center for Health Equity Research and Promotion, advancing national efforts to reduce disparities in care for vulnerable populations. From 1998 to 2012, he served as executive director of the University of Pennsylvania's Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics, overseeing its growth into one of the largest university-based health policy research organizations in the world. He later created and led Penn Medicine's Center for Health Care Innovation, reporting many of their efforts in approximately two dozen essays, primarily in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Dr. Asch has received national recognition for research, teaching and mentorship, including career achievement awards from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Society of General Internal Medicine, AcademyHealth and the Association of American Medical Colleges, among others. He is an elected member of the Association of American Physicians and the National Academy of Medicine (NAM). Among the many trainees and mentees he has supported, more than 10 have also been elected to NAM.

His late father, Dr. Stuart S. Asch, was professor of clinical psychiatry and later, professor emeritus of clinical psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine from 1976 until his passing in 2002.



# Physician Assistant Professional Oath

**I pledge to perform the following duties with honesty and dedication:**

I will hold as my primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all human beings.

I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence and justice.

I will recognize and promote the value of diversity.

I will treat equally all persons who seek my care.

I will hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.

I will assess my personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve my medical practice.

I will actively seek to expand my knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.

I will work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.

I will use my knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.

I will respect my professional relationship with the physician.

I will share and expand knowledge within the profession.

**These duties are pledged with sincerity and upon my honor.**

# Recipients of Degrees 2026

**Weill Cornell Medical College**

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# Masters of Science in Health Sciences for Physician Assistants

**May 14, 2026**

Jennifer Caggiano Schaub

Shannon Ali

Abigail Barrett

Gabrielle Lucia Bourdeau

Sophia Cecile Fatschel

Sri Sravya Gudipati

Justin I. Hoang

Faria Huq

Alyssa Millie Iryami

Stephanie Min Law

Chewon Lee

Amy Corinne Lefley

Mary Caroline Lewis

Kevin Shuxu Lin

Natalie Nicole Mercado

Lauren Brielle Miszkiewicz

Veerali Patel

Arya Puar

Christine Marie Rosa

Brianna Elizabeth Scallon

Gemma Clare Seeley-Joose

Yuliya Sevrynenko

Tara Morgan Share

Suvetha Sivakumar

Emily Katherine Smith

Afiat Sumia

Christine Jihae Ye



# Hippocratic Oath

**I do solemnly vow, to that which I value and hold most dear:**

That I will honor the Profession of Medicine, be just and generous to its members, and help sustain them in their service to humanity;

That just as I have learned from those who preceded me, so will I instruct those who follow me in the science and the art of medicine;

That I will recognize the limits of my knowledge and pursue lifelong learning to better care for the sick and to prevent illness;

That I will seek the counsel of others when they are more expert so as to fulfill my obligation to those who are entrusted to my care;

That I will not withdraw from my patients in their time of need;

That I will lead my life and practice my art with integrity and honor, using my power wisely;

That whatsoever I shall see or hear of the lives of my patients that is not fitting to be spoken, I will keep in confidence;

That into whatever house I shall enter, it shall be for the good of the sick;

That I will maintain this sacred trust, holding myself far aloof from wrong, from corrupting, from the tempting of others to vice;

That above all else I will serve the highest interests of my patients through the practice of my science and my art;

That I will be an advocate for patients in need and strive for justice in the care of the sick.

**I now turn to my calling, promising to preserve its finest traditions, with the reward of a long experience in the joy of healing.**

**I make this vow freely and upon my honor.**

# Doctors of Medicine

May 14, 2026

Chukwuebuka Chinedu Achebe ◊  
Cheyenne Katlin Acker \*  
Isabel Alexandra Alland  
Shannon Nicole Arnold ◊  
Nathan Ashe  
Mohit Aspal  
Stephanie Ann Azzopardi †  
NatalieDeana Dizon Badillo ◊§  
Daniel Rho Barbakoff ◊  
Rana Mohamed Barghout  
Makayla Kochheiser Beninati \*◊  
Ella Jeanne Blicher  
Nicolas Johannes Blobel †  
Kirsten Grace Bredvik †  
Elizabeth Adel Bundschuh ❖§  
Abigail Beatriz Calumpit  
Nisha Chandra \*❖§  
Jeremy Tzu-Huai Chang §†  
Divija Chopra ◊§  
Sarah Chowdhury §  
Briana Christophers †  
Roshan Javed Chudhry \*  
Callista Anne Clairmont  
Maressa Kavita Cumbermack \*◊§  
Felipe Badke d'Andrea †  
Alexis Nicole Hollingsworth Daly  
Tin Huu Dang §  
Hanix Emeral Daniel ❖  
Noelle Desir \*❖  
Sreehaas Digumarthi  
Gabrielle Lucía Dykhousé \*  
Allan Zigmar Enriquez  
Zion Floyd-Iverson  
Ana Paola Garcia ◊§  
Elyse Victoria Gonzales  
Ariel Gonzalez \*❖§  
Silvano Jesus Gonzalez  
Rachel Margaret Gropper ◊  
Sarah Zainab Hanif ❖§†  
Lexa Sophia Harpel

Courtney Sierra Harris  
Linh My He ◊  
Rahma Mahmoud Ibrahim ❖  
Jacob Keith Richards Jamison \*◊  
Abigail Marie Janke †  
Luz Magalis Jimenez  
Claire Therese Kenney §†  
Hyejin Kim †  
Jamie Jaeyi Kim  
Manish Kumar ❖◊  
Neerav Kumar \*◊  
Sophie C. Kush ◊  
Barr Lavi-Romer ❖  
Courtney Elizabeth Lee ◊  
David Li  
Joanna Qiao Lin ❖  
Taylor Alexis Lis ❖  
Michael X. L. Liu ◊§  
Amy Ziyue Lu \*◊  
Yilun Ma †  
Shalinie Mahadeo ◊  
Ashwin Mahesh \*  
Jez Lim Marston †  
Daniel Stephen McInerney  
Bala McRae-Posani \*❖◊  
Emily Suyin Szeto Mei  
Mackenna Marie Mejdell  
Miranda Agnes Metz ◊§  
Matthew Band Nagler  
Jesse Stephen Swyer Novak †  
Ian Russell Nykaza \*  
Michael Ong  
Hannah Otis  
Nicole Renee Palmer ◊  
Preethi Kasthuri Periyakoil †  
Nancy Qin \*◊  
Sarah Asif Qureshy  
Alex Raghunandan  
Varun Kumar Rohatgi  
Juliet Dimock Ryan ❖  
Sophia Salingaros \*❖◊

Swetha Vijaya Sathi  
Uthman Mohamad Shukairy  
Diego Oswaldo Sialer  
David Aaron Sprott  
Sarah Louise Stewart ◊  
Brendan Matthew Tarantino  
Daniel Anisfeld Tay ❖◊  
Samantha Tham  
Gianni Thomas  
Abhay Tiwari  
Adam Neal Tucker \*◊  
Caitlin Cristina Unkenholz ◊  
Anna Vaeth \*◊  
Victoria Elisabeth von Saucken †  
Nicole Card Weitzel  
Harrison Nicholas White ❖  
Sarah Wie ◊  
Joshua Daniel Winograd  
Carlyn Anne Wisherop  
Sarah Shu-Lien Wozniak ❖§  
Helen Fangnan Xu §  
Andrew Boyuan Yang ◊  
Danielle Inge Yerdon ❖◊  
Caroline Ji-Hae Yim Young  
Alexander Lun Zhao \*◊  
Eric Zhao \*  
Constance Zhou §†

Approval contingent on their successful completion of the academic program

\* Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society/with Academic Distinction

❖ Gold Humanism Honor Society

◊ with Honors in Research

§ with Honors in Service

† Weill Cornell/Rockefeller/Sloan Kettering Tri-Institutional M.D.-Ph.D. Program

# Cornell University Alma Mater

## Verse One

Far above Cayuga's waters,  
With its waves of blue,  
Stands our noble Alma Mater,  
Glorious to view.

## Refrain

Lift the chorus, speed it onward,  
Loud her praises tell;  
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater,  
Hail, all hail, Cornell.

## Verse Two

Far above the busy humming  
of the bustling town,  
Reared against the arch of heaven,  
Looks she proudly down.

**Music by**  
Opus 5 Music

*RODGERS is the official house organ at Carnegie Hall.*



**Weill Cornell Medicine**







**Weill Cornell**  
**Medicine**

